

A COLLECTION OF
ETCHINGS, BY THAT
INIMITABLE ARTIST
STEFANINO DELLA
BELLA, ...

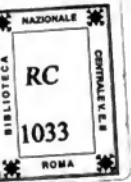
Stefano Della Bella, F. Colignon,
Pierre Mariette, Thomas Dodd, ...





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A

Collection of Etchings,

BY THAT INIMITABLE ARTIST

STEFANINO DELLA BELLA,

COMPRISING IN NUMBER

One Hundred and Eighty Pieces,

AND CONSISTING OF

LANDSCAPES, MARINE VIEWS, ANIMALS, FRIEZES,
ORNAMENTS, &c. &c.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR

OF

The Artist.

By THOMAS DODD.

LONDON:

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THE LIFE
OF
STEPHEN DELLA BELLA.

THIS celebrated graphic artist was the third son of FRANCIS DELLA BELLA, by Dianora, the daughter of Francis Buonaviti, and was born at Florence, on the eighteenth day of May, in the year 1610.

He had scarcely attained the age of two years and a half, when his father died. As soon, however, as he was capable of receiving instruction in art, he was placed with a goldsmith of the name of Giovanni Baptista Fossi, with whom he continued but a short time. Our young artist was then committed to the care of GASPAR MOLA. His friends flattered themselves, that being now under the tuition of so able an artist, he would have the opportunity of acquiring that eminence in his profession, which would eventually lead him on to preferment and fortune. But in this they were mistaken, for Mola was more intent on his own private studies and pursuits, than anxious to render instruction to his pupils, whereby Della Bella made but a very slight progress while he remained under the superintendence of this master. His mother then obtained him a new instructor in HORACE VANNI, to whom he was apprenticed.

In this family, our youth, Stephen, was called Stefanino, on account of his diminutive size and tender age, being then hardly thirteen, yet possessing remarkable affability and politeness in his address. He had scarcely remained a week in this school, when his great disposition for

drawing began to disclose itself: his first essays were in imitating the forms of some boxes, of common construction, in which he so well succeeded, that he surprized his companions. Shortly after, a few of the productions of JACQUES CALLOT were placed under his observation: he amused himself by copying these with a pen, and by continued application, he attained so great a proficiency as to produce excellent fac similes.

While thus situated, he constantly attended tilts, tournaments, horse races, and other public fetes or spectacles; from which he made designs, or drawings, so correctly formed, and touched with so much acuteness and spirit, that they excited the admiration not only of his companions, but of Horace Vanni, his master, and also of every one who frequented his house. But what appeared singular to all, was the method he adopted of designing the figures which filled or ornamented his compositions; his practice being, in all instances, to begin with the feet and work upwards; he never composed his figure according to the rules of general custom: but, notwithstanding, his proportions of the figure were correctly marked, and the attitudes appeared graceful, dignified, and elegant, which talent he certainly acquired from his study of the works of Jacques Callot.

These striking efforts of our young artist gained him the esteem and friendship of the learned; more particularly of Michael Agnolo Buonaroti, a descendant of the celebrated sculptor of the same name; and also of GIOVANNI BATISTA VANNI, the elder son of Della Bella's Master.

These two persons, remarking the talent of the youth, represented to his friends, that they considered his time not to be so advantageously occupied as the nature of his genius demanded; they moreover strongly recommended the art of painting, which had for its object, the imitation of all the productions of nature, as it offered a vast field for the developement of such natural abilities.

In consequence of this, he was shortly after placed in the school of Giovanni Batista Vanni; and as this artist was an able designer, and

feeling a lively interest in the success of our young artist, he adopted the most ready methods of instructing him in the principles of drawing; for it must be observed, that Stefanino had laboured until this time, without having attained either principles or rules, conducted only by the strength of his own judgment and natural discernment: but it must also be admitted, that he had from time to time, exhibited his pieces to **REMEGIO CANTAGALLINI**, and had profited, in some degree, by his friendly advice and assistance.

While under the tuition of Vanni, he made considerable progress, notwithstanding which he did not remain more than a year with this artist, but entered into the school of **CESARE DANDINI**.

Our young artist being conscious of the powers of Dandini over those of Vanni, applied himself to painting, with some diligence, under this new master, but the alluring effects of colours had no charm for the mind of Della Bella. He was found to be more generally employed in his usual practice of studying and sketching with a pen, the finest productions of Callot, and from that time conceived a strong desire to apply himself to the practice of etching, or engraving; he had also made himself acquainted, in some degree, with the management of the burin, while under the instruction of Vanni the silversmith; it being usual in this art, to teach young practitioners to engrave letters and ornamental decorations, as well in hollow as relief.

Although he had already some experience of the use of the graver, he preferred confining himself to etching, that manner being more in unison with his inventive genius, and better adapted to represent a great number of small figures after the taste and manner of the celebrated Callot, whom our young artist proposed to take as his model.

His earliest production in this department, is a representation of St. Anthony, archbishop and protecting Saint of Florence, which city appears in the back-ground. This piece is said to exist in the national cabinet of France, elsewhere it is scarcely to be seen, even in the most perfect collections of the works of this artist.

In the year 1627, when at the age of seventeen, he designed and

etched a representation of the magnificent entertainment given at Florence, on the first of August of the same year, in the hall of the palace of the Grand Duke, by the Piacevoli, one of the two companies of sportsmen known by the names of the Piacevoli and the Piatelli. This piece, Stefanino dedicated to **GIOVANNI CAROLO DE MEDICIS**: as an early essay, it is highly meritorious, although not without imperfections, both in the drawing and management of the aquafortis; but, on the other hand, it exhibits the fertility of his ideas, and the genius which directed his amazing powers.

His succeeding piece was produced in the following year, representing a naval engagement, at the bottom of which is this inscription: **PRISA DELLE DUE GALERE DI BIZERTA, ETC. DU 3 OCTOBRE, 1628.**

In the year 1632, he etched the portrait of **FRANCIS, PRINCE OF TUSCANY**, and a series of twenty emblems; also a frontispiece for the description of a fete, given at Florence, on the canonization of the blessed **ANDRE DE CORSINI**.

About this period he executed a view of Pisa, exhibiting the river Arno, which runs through the city, with its two bridges. On that in the foreground, is represented the grand boxing match which is celebrated annually on this bridge: two parties arriving from opposite sides of the river, a fight commences, which continues until one party is victorious. This design was afterwards engraved by **ANTONIO FRANCISCO LUCINI**, in the year 1634, in a style closely resembling the manner of Callot.

The early productions of Della Bella bear a close affinity to Callot's style, but as he gained freedom by practice, he adopted a manner so peculiarly his own, that it at once evinces the dexterity and rapidity of his hand.

The talents of our young artist now became somewhat distinguished, and he attracted the notice of the most discerning among the great patrons of art, residing at this time in Florence; we must here mention **PRINCE LORENZO DE' MEDICI**, who, sensible of the merits of Della Bella, and being informed of the nature of his pecuniary circumstances, libe-

rally took him under his protection, granted him a salary, and sent him to Rome, strongly urging him to pursue his studies. Della Bella had now began to realize his hopes, and the gladdening prospect was opening to his view. His ardent wishes were in some degree gratified, by having it in his power to contemplate objects so precious and so delightful to the mind of an artist. He devoted his time and talents in making drawings of the antiquities and most remarkable objects of grandeur of this wonderful city. The first circumstance of national interest that occurred in Rome, (after his settlement there), afforded him a fine opportunity for the exertion of his talents; this was the magnificent cavalcade that attended the Polish ambassador as he entered that city in the year 1623, under the Pontificate of Urban VIII. This production occupies six oblong sheets, which when joined, exhibits this extended and splendid procession. He dedicated this work as a token of grateful respect, to his patron, PRINCE LORENZO DE' MEDICI.

In this year he also etched a representation of the wonderful statue of Notre Dame, called *dell'Imprunetta*, inclosed within a kind of shrine.

The following year he likewise etched a view of the Castle of Saint Angelo, a variety of antiquities, a book of marine views, which he also dedicated to his patron, and a frontispiece for the description of a fete, given at Rome, on the 25th of February, 1634.

The preparations making at Florence in the year 1637, in honor of the marriage of FERDINAND II. DUKE OF TUSCANY, recalled Della Bella to his native city. But the first subject which engrossed his attention, was the engraving of the cenotaph, and emblems of death for the funeral obsequies of the EMPEROR FERDINAND II. which took place on the 2nd of April, 1637. The designs for these obsequies were composed and constructed by ALPHONSO PARIGI. He was next occupied in producing the representations of the fetes and ceremonies on the marriage of the Grand Duke Ferdinand. In the same year, (1637), he etched a portrait of Bernardino Ricci, on horseback, (surnamed, il Tedeschino, a celebrated buffoon of the court of the grand duke), with a view of Flo-

rence in the back-ground ; this production Della Bella dedicated to the Princess D'Urbino, Grand Duchess of Tuscany.

In the year 1639, Della Bella made a second tour to Rome, where he produced a thesis in commemoration of the canonization of the blessed Francisco Solanus, a franciscan friar, and apostle of Lima and Peru.

He also, among other productions, engraved a grand allegory, exhibiting the planetary system according to Copernicus, and two singular hieroglyphic Rebuses on Love and Fortune ; and, in the following year, with several other works, a frontispiece for a book, entitled, "*La selva di cipressi etc.*," written by *Margherita Costa*, and whose portrait he engraved for one of her works, entitled "*Letteure Amoroze di M^a. Costa.*"

Our artist having exhausted all that was interesting, and that tended to the improvement of his talents in Rome, and hearing of the noble protection afforded to the arts and sciences by the Cardinal de Richlieu, first minister of France, incited moreover by the applause with which the memory of Jacques Callot was mentioned, he resolved to quit Italy and visit France. The baron Alexander del Nero, who was on the eve of quitting Florence in the capacity of envoy from the grand duke to the court of France, admitted Della Bella into his suite, by which he incurred no travelling expenses, and the baron had provisional orders from the grand duke to provide him with funds answerable to his wants.

Our artist, on his arrival at Paris, had not much difficulty in making himself known ; his merit, and the reputation of his talents having long preceded him, his reception was most flattering. The Cardinal de Richlieu was at this time commanding at the siege of Arras, to which place he ordered Della Bella to repair, and employed him in designing a representation of the siege, and environs of that place. He acquitted himself with the happiest success, and in the following year, when he returned to Paris, he engraved the drawing, the execution of which was greatly admired. He was requested also by the Cardinal, to en-

grave several other striking events which had passed in the reign of Louis XIII.; such as the siege of Rochelle by the king's army, October the 30th, 1628, and those of Castelet and St. Omer, which took place in the year 1638.

Exclusive of the print of the siege of Arras, which we find dated at Paris, 1641. Della Bella, in the same year, designed and engraved the stage front of a theatre, and five scenes for the five acts of a tragic-comedy, entitled, *Mirame*, by M. Desmarets, which was produced at Paris, at a theatre constructed for the purpose in the hall of the Cardinal's palace, now the Palais Royal: this series of theatrical scenes was dedicated by our artist to the Cardinal Duc de Richlieu.

Della Bella in the following year, 1642, made drawings of the siege of Perpignan, with a view of its citadel. These were engraved by Francois Collignon on one plate, on which is inscribed "désignée par Beaulieu:"—this name of Beaulieu, which has been erroneously applied to Della Bella, as signifying *la belle*, has reference to the engineer of the siege, Sebastian de Pontault de Beaulieu, who conducted its operations.

The Cardinal de Richlieu, who died at the close of the year 1642, was soon followed by the monarch of France, Louis XIII., who departed this life the fourteenth of May, anno 1643. His surviving Queen, Anne of Austria, and mother of Louis XIV., being declared regent of the kingdom of France during the minority of her son, gave occasionally several fetes, and theatrical entertainments, for the amusement of the young monarch. Della Bella made designs, and engraved, in conjunction with M. Natalis, N. Cochin, and Valerian Spada, some of the ballets, &c. which were performed at the theatre of Le Petit Bourbon, (since used for Italian operas), in the presence of their Majesties and the whole court. These theatrical amusements took place during the year 1645, and they form altogether about thirty distinct pieces. In this year Della Bella made a design of a triumphal car, consecrated to the memory of Louis XIV., which F. Collignon engraved. The young monarch is seated in the car, and crowned by Victory.

The car is in the form of a vessel, surrounded by cupids, and drawn by one horse, harnessed. On the horse is a cupid, bearing the attributes of Mars.

Della Bella did not allow the amusements of the court wholly to occupy his attention, but applied himself to design the principal conquests of France during the minority of Louis XIV.; for instance, the famous battle of Rocroy, gained by the Duc D'Enghien, (commandant of the King's armies), in the month of June, anno 1643. This production, engraved by Francis Collignon, is in four sheets, surrounded by a rich border, within which is introduced several historical vignettes connected with the battle, and above is introduced the portrait of the Duke, within an oval of palms.

He likewise designed the events of the campaign of the Duc D'Enghien, with the taking of Philipsburg, and twenty other places in Germany, in the year 1644; together with the combat before the town and castle of Fribourg, in the month of August, 1644, which is introduced at the bottom of the same print. This piece is also on four sheets, and has the portrait of the Duc D'Enghien at the top, within some appropriate ornaments. This, with several other battles, views, and sieges, were engraved by Nicholas Cochin, from the designs of Della Bella, of which may here be noticed, the battle between the French army and that of the imperialists before Nordlingen, on the third of August, 1645, in four sheets, having the portrait of the Duc D'Enghien above. Also the battle of Lens, in Flanders, under the command of the Prince de Conde, and of several others, which will be noticed in the progress of the Catalogue of the works of Della Bella. These productions are very masterly, from the great variety of figures with which they are enriched, and the vast extent of scenery which each of them embraces.

All these sieges, plans, and views of places, connected with the history of the warlike exploits of the several commanders in the reign of Louis XIII., and during the early part of the reign of Louis XIV., were collected together by the Marechal de Beaulieu, and have long

since been deposited in the King's cabinet, and are there termed le grand Beaulieu.

In the year 1645, an embassador from Poland arrived at Paris in great state, to receive for Ladislaus Sigismund VI., King of Poland, the hand of the Princess Louisa Marie de Gonzales de Cleves. On this occasion Della Bella designed the entry of the magnificent cavalcade of the Polish ambassador into Paris ; but as it was of great extent, he did not undertake to engrave it, although twelve years previous, (in the year 1633) he engraved the entry of a Polish ambassador into Rome, under the Pontificate of Pope Urban VIII.

Della Bella remained in France about the period of ten years, being constantly employed either in designing, or engraving from his own drawings. While at Paris he became acquainted with Israel Silvestre, who had lately arrived from Rome, and also with Israel Henriet, (uncle of Israel Silvestre) who contracted with Della Bella for most of the plates performed by his own hand.

We find our artist about this period, and more particularly in the three following years, continually occupied in designing the battles and sieges of Mothe, in Lorraine ; Mardyke, in Flanders ; Nordlingen, in Suabia ; Balaguier, in Catalonia ; Bethune, in Artois : the naval engagement before the Isle of Rhodes ; the siege of Bergues-Saint-Vinox ; the siege of Dunkirk ; the taking of Ypres ; the battle of Lens, together with views of other places attacked by the arms of Louis XIV. These designs were progressively engraved by N. Cochin, with a fidelity and feeling correspondent to the talents of Della Bella, the object of this memoir.

Our artist occasionally supplied other publishers with designs to engrave from, and sometimes with series of plates which did not correspond with the class usually published by Israel Henriet ; of these we may mention two distinct series of plates, chiefly studies of the figure, which were published by Francois Collignon in the year 1646. Another similar series published by Jacques Van Merlen, of the same date,

and other series of different subjects, published by his most intimate and agreeable friend Francois Langlois. Of the works of Della Bella issued by Langlois, we may notice a series of eighteen pieces, (varying in size) entitled, *Raccolta di varii cappricci et nove inventioni di cartelle et ornamenti posti in luce dal Sig. Steffano della Bella, Pittor Fiorentino, e da lui disegnate et intagliate in Parigii appresso Fr. Linglese detto il Ciatres, con privil. di S. M. Christ, 1646.* Dedicated to *Antoine le Charron, baron de Dormelles.* Also a series of six prints, entitled, *Varii cappricci militari di Stef. della Bella;* and a set of thirteen landscapes in circles, also dedicated to Ant. le Charron, baron de Dormelles. A brochure of six plates of vases, and a book of studies of the human figure in thirty-eight plates, the latter print being the portrait of Thomas Aniello, usually called Masaniello the fisherman, who occasioned a temporary revolution in Naples in the year 1647. After the death of Langlois, Della Bella contributed to his widow a set of twelve plates of designs of Cartouches, serving as shields for coats of arms, titles, or for purposes of ornamental application. We should in this place notice, that about this period Della Bella engraved a series of eight marine views from the same designs as those he engraved at Rome, in the year 1634, having the same dedication to Prince Lorenzo de Medici attached to them, but with this difference, that they possess a superiority of execution, and are numbered one to eight, having the additional distinction of the initials of Langlois, inscribed thus: *F. L. D. Ciatres excudit cum privil.:* but above all his productions that appeared about this interval, none stands more pre-eminently distinguished than his extended perspective view on the Pont Neuf at Paris. It at once established his fame and gained him unusual reputation, with the King's patent, he being permitted to dedicate the same to the French monarch, Louis XIV. This production is esteemed as the most interesting of all his performances, on account of the extent of the scene, and the multiplicity of figures introduced in the most diversified variety of action and occupation. No scene could be more applicable to the

fecundity of his imagination in the formation of the groupes, and of expressing the action of his figures. The whole appears as one grand scene of animation.

In the course of this year, 1646, we find Della Bella incessantly engaged in his profession. He was at this time employed in engraving four distinct packs of playing cards, serving the double purpose of instruction blended with amusement. These cards were formed or invented by M. Desmarests, by order of the court, to aid or assist the education of Louis XIV. The first pack, consisting of fifty-two cards, is formed to instruct in the history of ancient mythology: on these cards are engraved the representations of the gods, demigods, goddesses, and heroes of antiquity, to which is added, beneath each, the requisite historical detail. The second pack, consisting also of fifty-two cards, being a geographical game, is entitled a map of the world; the four parts of the globe are distinguished by four different colours; the empires, kingdoms, states, republics, provinces, &c. fill the remainder of each suite: each card is accompanied with an abridged account of the place it represents. The third pack relates to the history of celebrated women, into which is introduced the most striking traits in the characters of all the queens, heroines, and illustrious women, from the most distant ages, in progression, to the time of their publication: these queens are represented, some in cars, others on horseback, and the remaining ones standing, or seated. The fourth pack, consisting of forty cards, contains the portraits and history of the Kings of France, from Pharamond, in succession, to Louis XIV. These different packs of cards are allowed to be very entertaining and interesting, and are engraved in Della Bella's best style.

At this period, by order of the court, Della Bella was employed to design and engrave the prints to decorate a work entitled, *Triomphes de Louis le Juste*, XIII. du nom. par Valdor, in folio. This work was printed in the royal printing office, and first appeared in the year 1649. The number of prints to this work consist of forty-nine, including vignettes, ornamental letters, or the different allegories with which it

is enriched. The whole of the designs, and several of the engravings, are by Della Bella, others are by Claude Goyrand and Francois Chauveau.

During the year 1647, Della Bella produced but little in the way of art, his principal time being occupied in a tour in Holland, from whence he returned to Paris in the same year.

The pieces by him or from his designs bearing this date, are two tablets, the first consists of the exterior ornaments of an escutcheon according to the ancient rules of heraldry, and is dedicated to the Mareschal de Villeroy, by Vulson de la Colombiere. This piece is engraved by Samuel Bernard, and published by Pierre Mariette, under the King's patent. The companion tablet, (both of which occupy large sheets), exhibits the marks and exterior ornaments of the King's coat of arms, those of the royal offspring, and the principal officers of the crown. This piece is dedicated to the Count de St. Aignan, also by Vulson de la Colombiere, and published by Mariette.

The only remaining examples of his art bearing this date is a set of twelve prints of Cartouches, published by the widow of Francois Langlois, and a set of eight small prints of marine views, comprising those of Calais and Amsterdam, a view of vessels passing between the straits of Dover and Calais, and a view on the coast of Italy. This set of eight views is dedicated to Tomaso Guidonto, of Florence, and published by Israel Henriet.

The principal productions of our artist that appeared in the year 1648, is the figure of Fame, sounding with a trumpet, the benefits extended by the river Loire, to commerce, arts, and manufactures, published by P. Mariette.

A series of four landscapes and marine views, into which is introduced the effect of the four elements, entitled, Terra, Aqua, Aer, Ignis.

A book of ornamental friezes in sixteen prints: some copies have the address of N. Langlois, son of Francois Langlois, while other sets of the same work have the address of P. Mariette.

A set of twenty-four pieces, entitled, *Diversi cappricci fatti par S. D. Bella.* The title of which has the representation of a performer on the sambucus, accompanied by a boy playing on the triangle.

A set of animals in twenty-four prints, entitled, *Diversi animali, fatti di Stef. Della Bella.*

The productions thus enumerated, together with a frontispiece pre-fixed to a Paraphrase on the Psalms of David, by M. Godeau, bishop of Grasse and Vence, are the whole of his works that appeared during the year 1648.

In the following year we find our artist more actively employed, chiefly in producing subjects of devotion, but more especially in a variety of representations of the Virgin Mary. We may also enumerate two books, one on the principles of design, containing thirty-two plates, and another to teach the art of drawing, in sixteen plates. A series of twelve landscapes. Seven prints exhibiting the house of the Lady of Loretto, and plans of its construction. A set of eight plates, entitled, *Diverse figure et paesi fatti par S. D. Bella,* and the frontispiece to the works of Paul Scarron. This satirical poet is represented in this frontispiece, seated in an arm-chair, his back towards the spectator. He is surrounded, (in lieu of the nine muses), by a group of old women in antick dancing postures, who are laughing at the situation of the poet, which is somewhat ludicrous.

Thus the superiority of La Bella's talents, and the number of pieces he produced while at Paris, gained him such universal esteem and reputation, as well in private life as at court, that to pronounce his name was furnishing sufficient matter for panegyric: every one was anxious to pay a tribute to his virtues and his good qualities, as well as to his talents.

As a proof of this general esteem, even with the most insubordinate, we shall cite only the following trait, frequently related by him to his friends after his return to Italy.

During the tempestuous time of the minority of Louis XIV., tumults and revolts were so frequently created by the enemies of the Cardinal

Mazarine, who at that time governed the queen, that he, with all his dependants, especially those that were of Italian origin, became objects of fury with a lawless mob. In the midst of these scenes of tumult and insurrection, Della Bella one day found himself surrounded in the streets of Paris, by a number of furious people, who seemed determined on his assassination, merely because he appeared to be an Italian. Della Bella, alarmed at his situation, ran and took refuge in the company of some ladies whom he knew. One of them observing his threatened danger, cried in a loud voice, what are you doing, my friends ; this person is a Florentine. The aggressors withheld by the expressions of this lady, gave time to Della Bella to exclaim, gentlemen, I am Stefanino Della Bella : this was sufficient not only to save his life, but to occasion those, who a few minutes before would have murdered him, to retire respectfully, and leave him at liberty to return home.

It would be difficult to express the great respect shewn to Della Bella at Paris, by all ranks ; the Cardinal Mazarine honored him by his friendship, and he was treated by all with the honours due to nobility. Often was he solicited to attach himself to the court ; and was even offered the honor of being appointed drawing master to his Majesty ; but Della Bella, who had been accustomed to a studious application in his profession, and feeling an aversion to the manners and pursuits of the great, steadily refused them all : besides, he foresaw that the continued troubles and tumults which then raged in France, exposed him, in some degree, to insults and dangers. These events probably gave rise to his wish to leave Paris immediately, and return to his native country. He frequently expressed to his friends, his great desire to end his days at Rome, amidst antiquities that he had so much admired, and which had formed to him so many objects of attention, and had yielded to him so much satisfaction during the progress of his studies in that city. He had, (as has been already noticed), during the year 1647, made a tour into Holland. In that excursion he had an opportunity of seeing the celebrated artist Rembrandt Van Rhyn, and of observing many of his exquisite productions in the graphic art. The style of this artist created

in the mind of Della Bella the highest admiration ; and it was from this circumstance, that on his return from Holland to France he endeavoured to imitate it. In the following instances this attempt may be readily discovered, such as the set of twelve heads habited in the Persian costume, in the frontispiece of which Della Bella introduced his own portrait. The same intention is likewise discernible in the greater part of those heads in his drawing book, intitled, *Principii del disegno*, in twenty-six pieces. The designs of the heads, and the effect of the chiaro scuro, prove clearly his attempt at imitating this celebrated artist. Notwithstanding this, Della Bella soon relinquished this style to adopt that of his own, which to him was more familiar in its application, and consequently more practical and consistent with his genius. It is also to this tour or voyage that we are indebted to his art for the suite of eight marine views of Amsterdam, Calais, &c. ; which were published at the termination of the year 1647.

Our artist now quitted Paris and returned to Florence, where he arrived in the year 1650, loaded with the estimation of all who appreciated his talents, and bearing with him the regret of his admirers in the country he had recently quitted. Thus situated in Florence, he immediately experienced the favors of his Sovereign, with the united applause of his fellow-citizens.

He found himself at once obligated to relinquish that life of ease and quietness which he had promised to himself.

Prince Matthias, who felt a sincere attachment for Della Bella, strongly assisted, by pressing requests, and a considerable pension, in fixing our artist once more in his native city. The virtuoso among his fellow-citizens, also felt a laudable pride in forming and cherishing the acquaintance and friendship of so distinguished an artist. Among these was an officer of high reputation who had recently returned from a campaign in Spain, in the capacity of Quarter-master-general, named Denis Guerini. This person was well skilled in both civil and military architecture. Their tastes and dispositions being in exact conformity, their friendship became mutual ; thus aiding and cultivating

with each other, those sciences connected with their several avocations. There was then also living at the court of Florence, a young artist highly esteemed by Prince Matthias, named Livio Mehus:—this artist had previously amused and improved himself, by sketching with a pen from the works of Callot and Della Bella; and some of these sketches had fallen under the notice of Della Bella during his residence at Paris, but without ascertaining the name of the artist, but whom he considered to be of high abilities, by the masterly touches he discerned in them; but to the surprise of Della Bella, in Livio Mehus he discovered the author. From this circumstance Della Bella encouraged the promising genius of the young artist, and engaged him to assist occasionally in his work.

They did not wait long for a favourable opportunity of exercising their joint talents, for at that time the fortress of Porto-longone, which had been for many years occupied by the French, was besieged by the Spaniards, retaken and entered by breach on the fifteenth of August, 1650. About the same time the Spaniards also took possession of the fort of Piombino. These events were subjects suited to the talents of Della Bella, and to which he called in the aid of Livio, and of the officer Guerini, the latter person neglecting nothing that could forward their work, describing to them the position of these two places, with the plan of attack. These particulars he received from correspondents in Spain as the sieges advanced. The two besieged places were engraved on two distinct plates; that of the post of Longone by Della Bella, was dedicated to the Count D'Ognat, viceroy of Naples; and that of the siege of Piombino was dedicated, by Livio Mehus, to the Conte di Conversano, from whom he received a purse of fifty piastres. Baldinucci asserts that the latter of these pieces was the production of Mehus, and it does appear in this instance that Livio exercised or tried his talent in etching the plate of the siege of Piombino, under the guidance of Della Bella; although there appears great similarity in the style of the work, yet a marked difference is plainly discernible in the characters of the heads of the figures.

Notwithstanding the honours and caresses which Della Bella enjoyed at Florence, both by the great and his fellow-citizens, who vied with each other in rendering homage to his talents and personal merit, he could not resist the secret wish of his heart to revisit his much-loved city of Rome. Scarcely had Della Bella remained a twelvemonth in Florence, than he requested of Prince Matthias the necessary absence for the journey. The Prince consented to his request, and placed Livio Mehus under the care and guidance of Della Bella, further to pursue and cultivate his art during the sojournment of Della Bella in that city. It was at Rome where Livio more maturely profited by the instruction of Pietro Berrettini da Cortona, under whose guidance he was again placed for improvement. Thus advancing in his profession, Della Bella compelled him, from time to time, to produce some composition best suited to his capacity, and which he regularly transmitted to the court of Florence.

These regular marks of attention on the part of Della Bella, and the rapid improvement of Livio, gained for them both an increase of favour from their patron: but at one period it appears that Livio became very languid in his profession, and seemed to wish to resign the study of this art for that of engraving. Della Bella, in this instance, had to exercise himself towards Livio in the most energetic conversation; representing to him how much it would be regretted, after producing such favourable examples in his art, thus to abandon it for a talent which, to Della Bella, did not appear half so congenial to his abilities. Livio, profiting from this judicious advice, determined to apply himself with more enterprise and energy. So that Florence is accountable to Della Bella, in some degree, for possessing a painter who eventually proved to possess such intrinsic merit. Della Bella did not long enjoy that tranquillity which his stay at Rome procured him, and which yielded to him so much delight. The hereditary Prince of Tuscany, Cosmo de Medici, having attained that age when the study of drawing becomes practical, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Ferdinand the Second, father of Cosmo, concluded on placing him under the

tuition of Della Bella. For this purpose it was requisite that the artist should leave his much-loved solitude, and return to Florence. On his departure from Rome he left his young friend Livio still under the guidance of Pietro da Cortona, who now paid more than ordinary attention to his pupil. Thus Livio made a very rapid progress in the art, without neglecting his natural disposition for designing compositions in small proportions. Della Bella had not much difficulty in gaining the respect and esteem of the young Prince, who possessed a natural talent for the study of drawing, and a love for the fine arts in general ; and who, at a more advanced age, became the protector of all artists who visited Florence, by a truly royal liberality and patronage bestowed on them. Our artist being now occupied in this department as tutor to the young Prince, practised his art as an engraver only occasionally, as we find very little produced by him after the year 1650, in comparison to what he had previously performed. In the year 1651, appeared a set of eleven prints (in circles) of Moors and Hungarians on horseback, and a set of six designs of eagles.

In 1652, nothing appeared but a solitary frontispiece to a book entitled *Il Mercurio di D. Vittorio Siri*, published at Leghorn. In the following year he engraved six views in the gardens of La Villa di Pratolino, at Florence; and a set of twelve pieces of ornamental grotesques. In the year 1654 he produced nine prints of hunting scenes ; but what is still more an object of curiosity, in his art (which is said to have been produced at this period) is an etching on a kind of prepared mezzotinto ground, wherein the lights are raised by a scraper or burnishing tool, to give it the requisite effect. The subject is a lady in a hunting dress, leading a dog by a cord. The name of Della Bella is inscribed twice on the plate. In the cabinet of M. Dijonval there are two impressions from this plate, one with the mezzotinto ground, and the other after the same ground was worn from the plate, exhibiting only the etching, and the imperfect effect of the mezzotinto ; consequently this example in mezzotinto is prior, or about coeval with those productions in this peculiar line of art, performed by Theodore

Caspar a Furstemberg, which bear the date of 1656, and those of Prince Rupert, which appeared about two years later. We owe to Louis a Siegen, an Hessian officer, the invention of this peculiar art in the science of chalcography : secondly, it appears to have been communicated by him to Theodore Caspar a Furstemberg, and also to Prince Rupert, and probably to Della Bella, who must have been furnished with a prepared plate, to exercise his talent upon : but as I do not learn, with satisfaction, that the above date of 1654 is affixed to this print, it might have been produced two or three years later than what is attributed by the original biographer of Della Bella ; be this as it may happen, the print, in its perfect or original state is of the utmost rarity.

In this place it is requisite to notice that Colonel Siegen dedicated one of his productions to Cardinal Mazarine, in the year 1657, which he engraved from a picture of Caracci, of the Virgin with the infant Christ. This, I have but little doubt, was performed by the Colonel while in Paris, to make known the novelty of his invention. I shall conclude this remark, by intimating this opinion, that Cardinal Mazarine, or some friend, obtained from the Colonel a prepared plate, and transmitted it, with a detail of the manner of the practice of Mezzotinto, to their favorite artist Della Bella, and from which he performed this plate as an experiment. If this print is not dated 1654, as it has been presumed, I should rather ascribe the time of its production about the date of 1657 to 1660.

In the year 1655, our artist produced a set of six views of the Port of Leghorn ; a set of four landscapes of an upright form, and a large etching, representing a warrior bearing off a female on horseback, while he is pursued by another horseman. This piece is enclosed with a border of ornaments, supported by two angels ; but the principal work of Della Bella, which he commenced about the period of this date, 1655, is a series of eighteen prints, exhibiting the fetes and ballets given at Modena, on the occasion of the nuptials of Prince Alphonso D'Este with Laura Martinizzi, niece of the Cardinal de Mazarine. This series of engravings Della Bella performed at the special

request of Francis D'Este, the father of Prince Alphonso. As many of these pieces are on an extensive scale, they must have occupied a considerable portion of his time; some of them represent grand equestrian and other active exercises, with theatrical or allegorical scenery, in which ballets of action, cavalcades, &c. are introduced. The whole exhibits a scene of theatrical splendour but seldom witnessed. Notwithstanding the length of time which this work must have occupied in its progress, and the avocations in directing the studies of his august pupil; Della Bella continued to produce occasionally some new pieces from his designs. Thus, in the year 1656, he issued a suite of six prints of a circular form, of landscapes and marine views, into which he has introduced figures that form the prominent object of the scene. In two of these pieces are persons on horseback: two others, one of which has two satyrs, and the companion has a wood-nymph suckling its offspring. The other two are views of quays or sea-ports, in one of which a Turkish seaman is moving a bale of goods. The companion print has a Turk sitting on a bale of goods, while another is laying on the quay, resting his head on his elbows.

In the course of this year, Della Bella also engraved a suite of six prints in and about Rome. The print that forms the frontispiece to this set, represents Della Bella, when very young, seated, and occupied in making a drawing from the grand vase, in the gardens of Medici: this is probably engraved from a drawing he made on his first visit to Rome, in the year 1633 or 1634. The remaining prints of this series, represent the temple of Antoninus Pius, the arch of Constantine, the temple of concord, and two landscapes, with either figures, or cattle.

In this year he also etched a frontispiece for the works of Galileo Galilei, which were published at Bologna, in two vols. 4to. We only find two prints attributed to him during the following year, 1657, these represent young bacchanals, or children's sports with goats: they are nearly of a circular form, being about eight inches in diameter in height, and about nine inches in width.

Nothing further appears by the hand of our artist, till the year 1660. At this time we have to notice a print of the tyrant Phalaris ordering a man to be burnt alive in the brazen bull, from a design of Polydore de Caravaggio: Lucretia destroying herself, from a design of Parmegiano, and a few bas reliefs from the antique.

In the year 1661, he was again occupied in engraving some allegorical pieces, in celebration of the nuptials of Cosmo III., Prince of Tuscany, with Margherita Louisa of Orleans. One of these pieces has the portraits (in profile) of this prince and his spouse, the one above the other, in the same medallion, which is supported by two angels flying, they also support the arms of the house of Medici and those of France. The order of these ballets and fetes was under the superintendence of Alexander Carducci, whose name appears to some of the prints, as the inventor of the designs, and that of Ferdinand Tacha, as the mechanist in the operation of them.

There are several small pieces attributed to our artist, as being produced by him in the year 1662, among which are noticed some etchings of Turkish parties in conversation; some studies of children sporting with dogs; two different compositions of the flight into Egypt, and other subjects; but as neither of these pieces are dated, we cannot precisely fix them at this period.

The battle of the Amalekites is instanced as an example of his work, during the year 1663, and a print, of death on horseback triumphantly dealing his havoc in the midst of a battle.

We are now arrived at the period when Della Bella was assailed by a tedious and painful infirmity, which eventually created a despondency and derangement of mind. We are informed by Baldinucci, that during some intervals of attack of his disorder, he designed and engraved a series of six prints, of an oval form, in which is represented the triumph of death over all ages. Here death appears in the most terrific and appalling attitudes, carrying away indiscriminately men, women, and children. Five of these pieces are well known to the observers of prints. The sixth, which last occupied the attention,

of Della Bella, represents death in the act of hurling a young man into an abyss. While producing this piece, it was the fate of our artist to fall a victim to the universal enemy. This last plate being left unfinished at his death, accounts for its non-appearance with the remaining five. It was afterwards compleated by Giovanni Batista Galestrucci, who had studied under Della Bella.

Thus terminated the career of this excellent artist, in the 54th year of his age. The public grief, on this occasion, was mingled with that of all the court of the Grand Duke; but more especially it touched the feeling of Cosmo the Third, who, during the time of Della Bella's affliction, anxiously inquired daily as to his health, and afforded him every comfort and benefit that could be devised for his restoration.

The remains of Della Bella were entombed in the Church of St. Ambrose, in Florence, on the day following his death, which happened the twenty-second day of July, anno 1664. His memory will be held in everlasting veneration in his works.

FINIS.



Sigf. Dr. R. B. maire j'ent



2



Steph. Della Bella invent. sculpsit





Della Bella, storia, front.





Fug. Is. De Heilige vaders, voor.

85



Sur la rivière de la vallée de l'Oréon.





D. Della Bella invent. fecit





fig. della Bella inuenit fecit





Stof. Della Bella invent. fecit





ter. Della Brusina etat. friz.





Stef Della Bella pinacof. frett





Sig. Della Bella jancet ferit





G. Della Bella pueri fecit





Sinfonia Rehe verter prae.



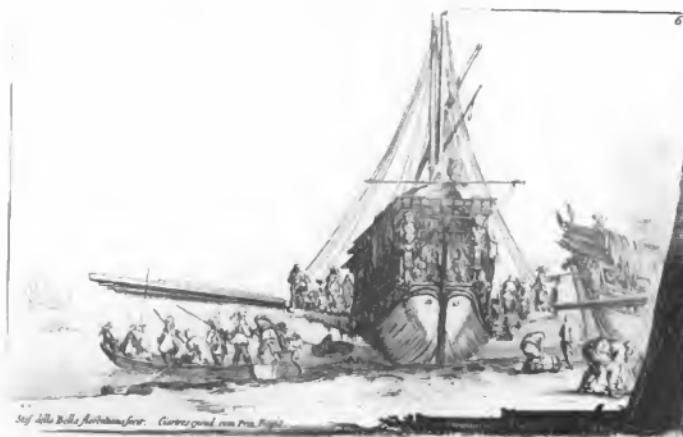


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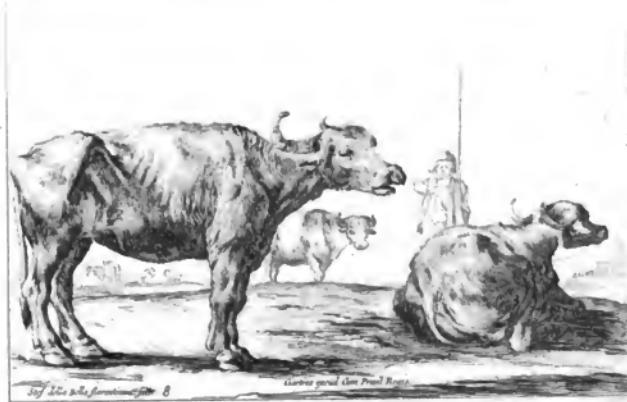
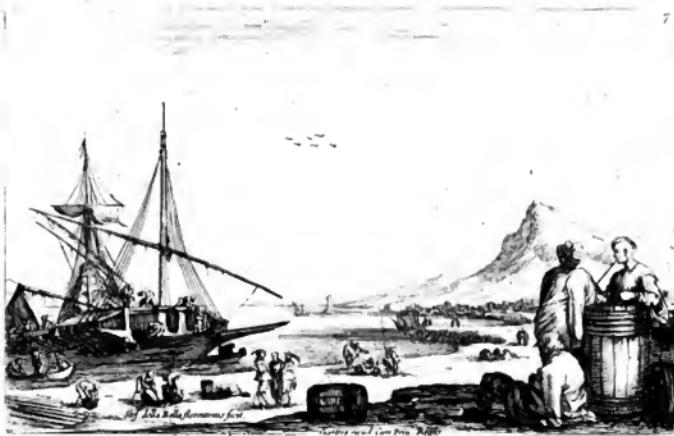


4

B
S



B
15



B
15



Vano Carrion Military de San Bella Bella.



S. D. la Bella fecit.

F. L. D. Carron's scud. Cum Privil. Regis.





S. D. la Bella fric



S. D. la Bella fric

F. L. D. Cuartos ejecuta con Paul. Riqu





J. B. de Boissiere fecit

F. D. B. L'Amour. G. Van Pelt. Roma



S. D. la Bella G.

D
18



Sopra della Bella tra gli agnelli scena



Sopra della Bella tra gli agnelli scena

B
E



Sog' della Bella Is' Siziana



Sog' della Bella Is' Siziana





Stef della Bella Isola Sogno f. 10



Stef della Bella Isola Sogno f. 10

B
S



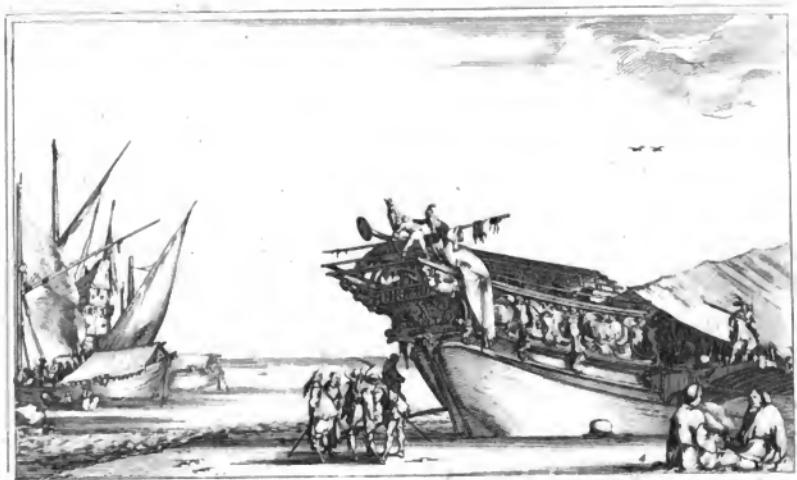
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3



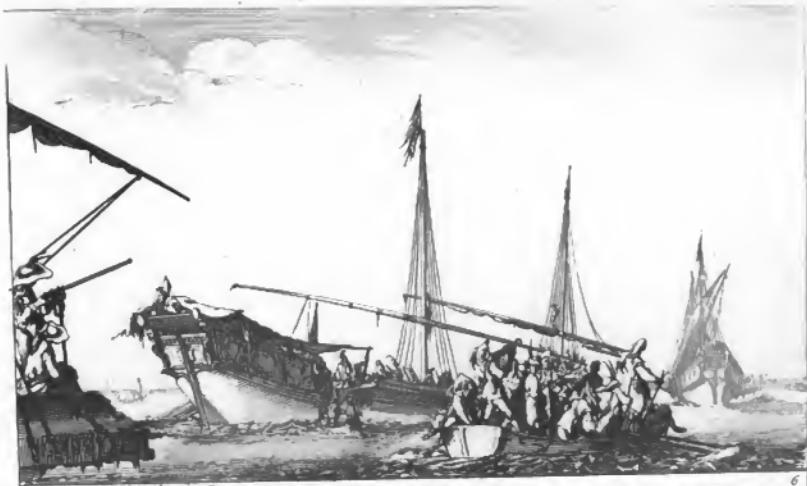
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F.L.D. Chartres excudit Cum Pr.

538



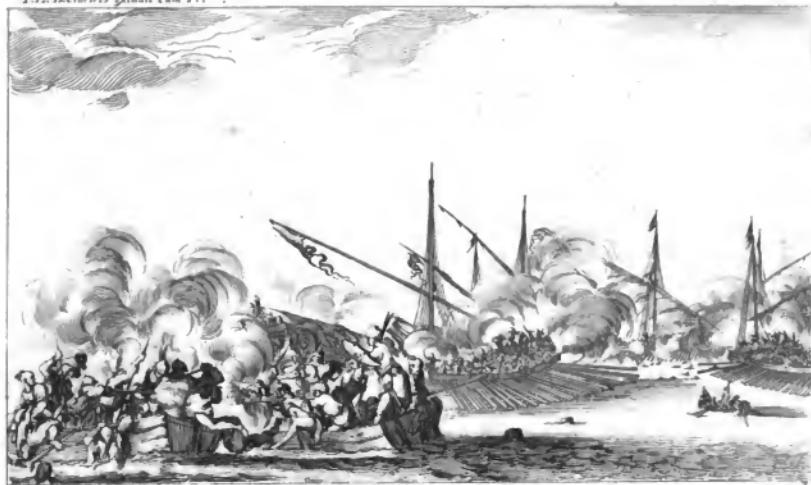


F.L.D. Canticus excudit Cum Pr.

6



F.I.s. D.Garrros gendre Cam Pr.



B
W



F. T. D. L. Etches Exclusa Cum Pr.





3. Stuf. delle belle fiabe con grande



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4 Stoffi della Bella fior
Con privilegio



5 Stoffi della Bella fior
Con privilegio



6 Stoffi della Bella fior
Con privilegio

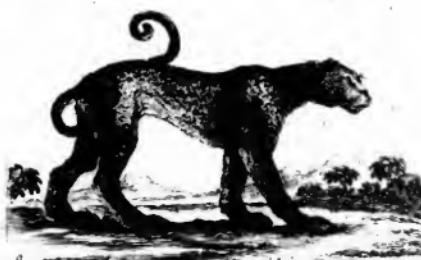




7. Stuf della Bella fiera con grande



8. Stuf della Bella fiera con grande



9. Stuf della Bella fiera con grande



10



Prof. Lehrs B. Grav.

11



11

Prof. Lehrs B. Grav.

12



12 Prof. Lehrs B. Grav.



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13 Stef. della Bella fecit



14 Stef. della Bella fecit, cum privilegio

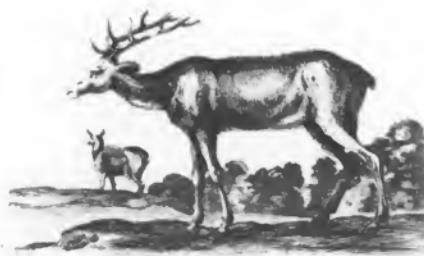


15 Stef. della Bella fecit

Cum privilegio



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16. Stag della Bella foresta
Con grandezza



17. Stag della Bella foresta
Con grandezza



18. Stag della Bella foresta
Con grandezza



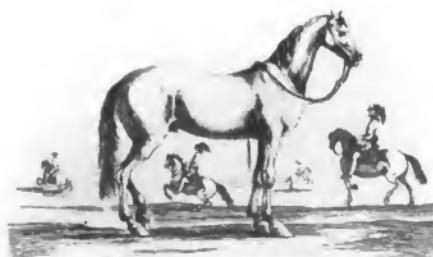
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19. Stufi della Bella fiera. Cum præstis.



20. Stufi della Bella fiera. Cum præstis.



21. Stufi della Bella fiera. Cum præstis.



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22. *Stufi della bella fiera* *c'era privilegio*



23. *Stufi della bella fiera* *c'era privilegio*



24. *Stufi della bella fiera*



29



Cosa grande Regia.

s. D. Bolla inv. et finit.



S. D. Bella inv. & sc.

Cam. Privat. Regis. 2



S. D. Bella inv. & sc.

Cam. Privat. Regis. 3



S. D. Bella inv. & sc.

B
E



J. D. Belli inv. & sc.

Com. Paul. Rognet.



J. D. Belli inv. & sc.

Com. Paul. Rognet.



J. D. Belli inv. & sc.

Com. Paul. Rognet.



J. D. Belli inv. & sc.

Com. Paul. Rognet.



J. D. Belli inv. & sc.

Com. Paul. Rognet.

B
15



S. D. Bella inv. & sc.

Cum Primit. Regis. 8



S. D. Bella inv. & sc.

Cum Primit. Regis. 9



S. D. Bella inv. & sc.

Cum Primit. Regis. 10





J. D. Belli inv. &c. fec.

Cum Privilegio Regis



J. D. Belli inv. &c. fec.

Cum Privilegio Regis



J. D. Belli inv. &c. fec.

Cum Privilegio Regis







Stef. Della Bella inv. sculps.

F. Linalfe exaud. Cum Privilegio Roi Chriſt.





N. Della Bella incis.

F. L. D. Il Ciardino excud. Cum Privil. Regae. Christ.





Ge. Della Bella inv. fecit.

F. L. D. M. Corrieri excud. Cum Privilegio Christi.

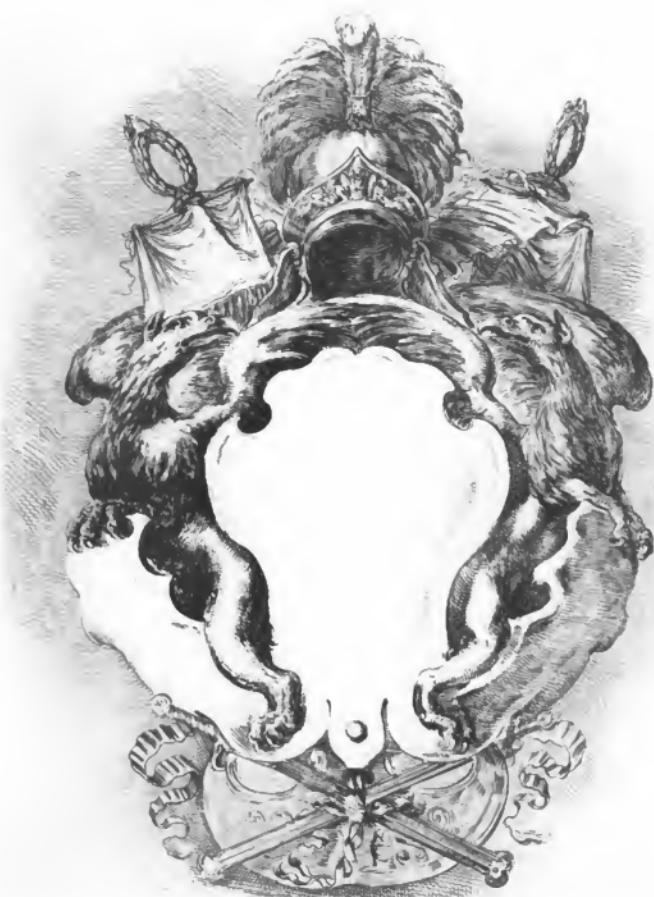




Sebastiano della Bella Jr. fecit.

F. L. D. M. Ciampini excud. Cum primis Regis Cbris.





R. Della Bella inv. sculps.

F. S. D. Il Carissimo exaud. Cum Privil. Regis. Chriji.

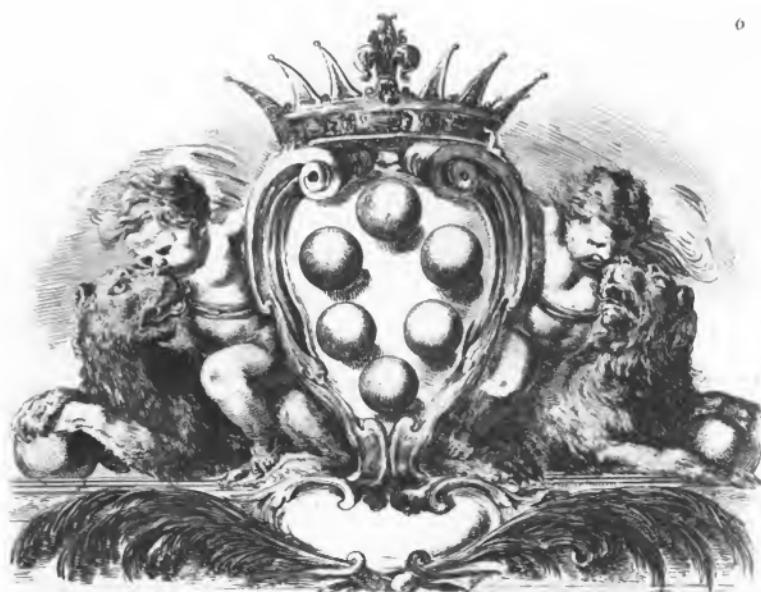




Sig^r Della Bella in fecit.

F. L. D. Il Ciarines excud. Cum Prinal Regni Chrys.





Stef. Della Bella inv. sculps.

F. L. D. M. Gariver excud. Cum Privilegio Regis Obrij.





Siḡr Della Bella ju. p̄xit

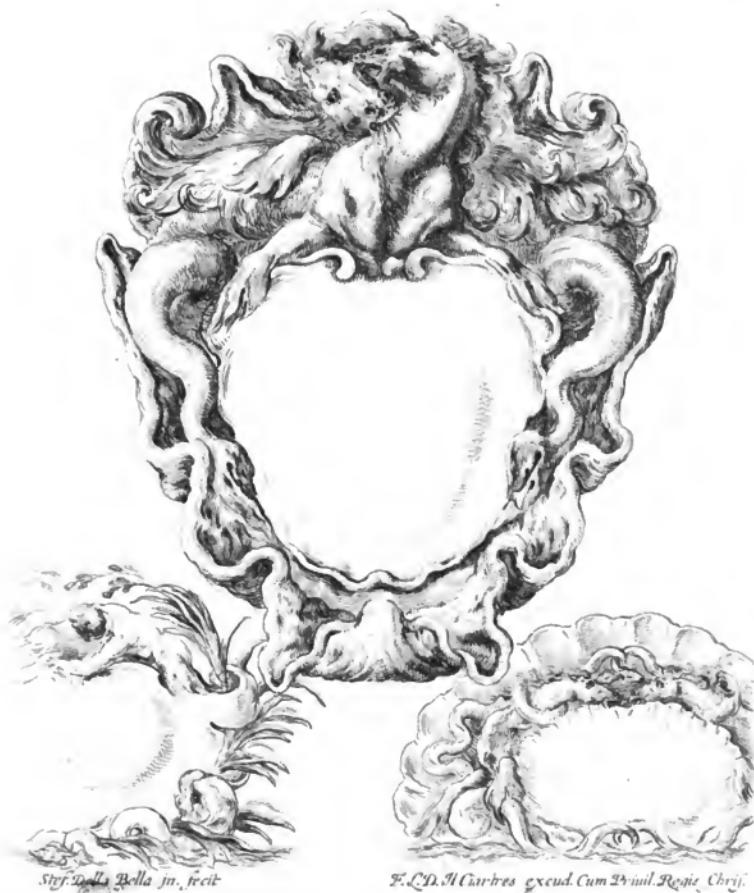
F. L. D. H. Cuivres exud. Cum Privil. Regis Chr̄f.

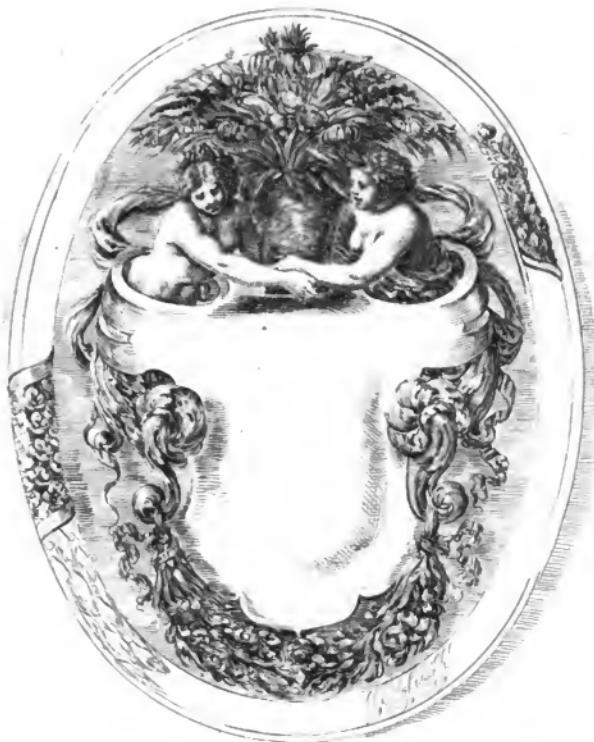




Stef. Della Bella in fecit
F. L. D. H. Clares excud. Cum Privilegio Regis Christi.



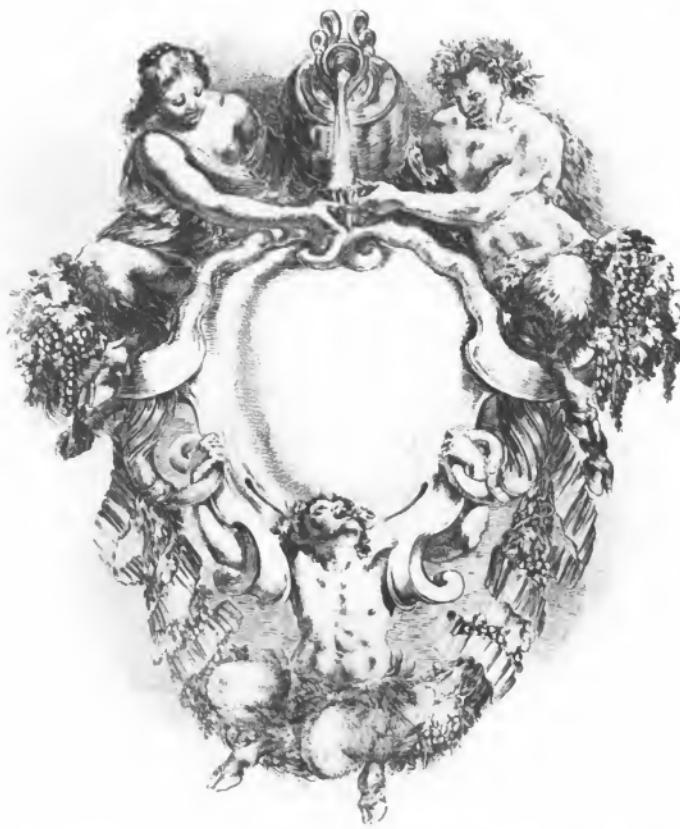




Sig. Della Bella in fecit

F. L. D. M. Garres excud. Cum Privilegio Clavig.





Francesco Belli inv. fecit:

F.L.D. il Carrives ex ead. Cum Privilegio Regis Officij.





Francesco Della Bella inv. fecit.

F.L.D. il Garibaldi exaud. Cum Privilegio Regis Christi.



B

F. L. D. M. Carrara grand. Com 27 real Regno Obs: 1.

V. F. Della Bella inv. fecit.





Sig. Della Bella inv. fecit.

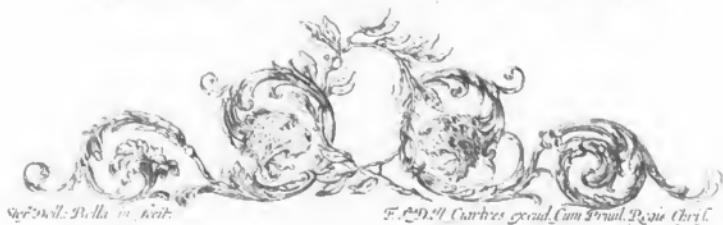
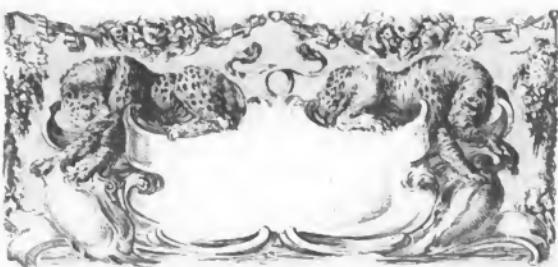
F. L. D. H. Cartres excud. Cum Privil. Regis Chrij.



Sig. Della Bella inv. fecit.

F. L. D. H. Cartres excud. Cum Privil. Regis Chrij.





Sty: Della Bella in fecit.

F. D. D' Chartres excud. Cum Privil. Regis Christ.



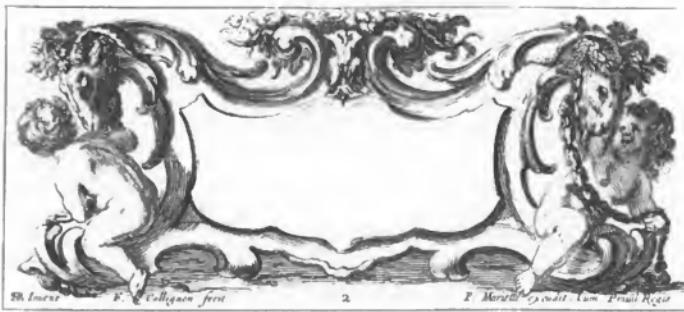
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F.G.D. Il Camere Grand. Cina Grand. Sogno Chrij.

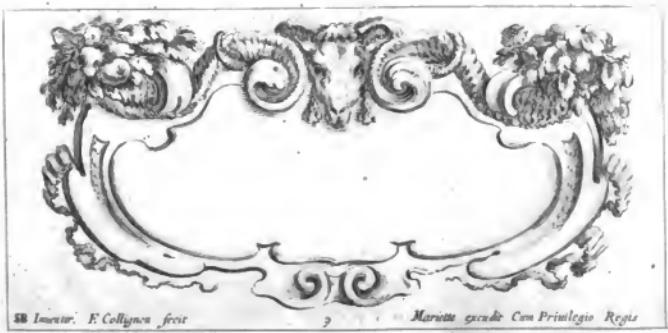
N.F. Della Bella in front.



18







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18

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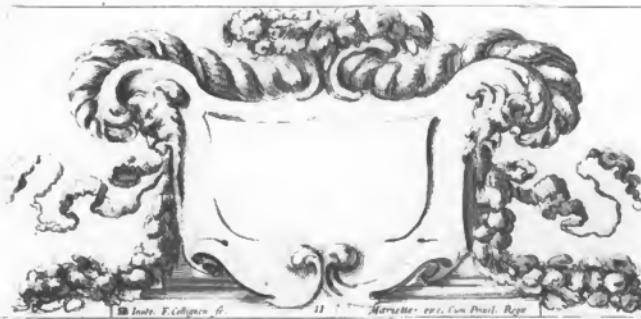
Inventor F. Collignon fecit.

P. Marette excudit Cum Privilegio R. S.



Inventor F. Collignon fecit.

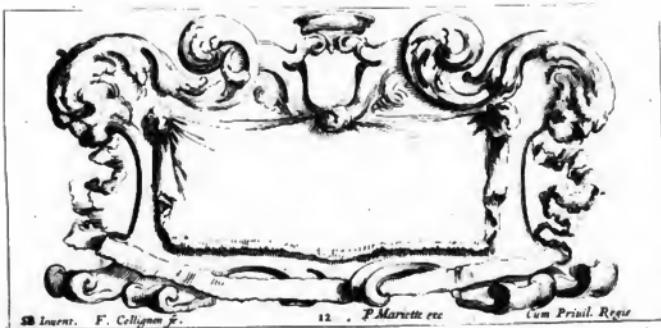
12 P. Marette excudit Cum Privil. Regis



Inventor F. Collignon fecit.

12 P. Marette excudit

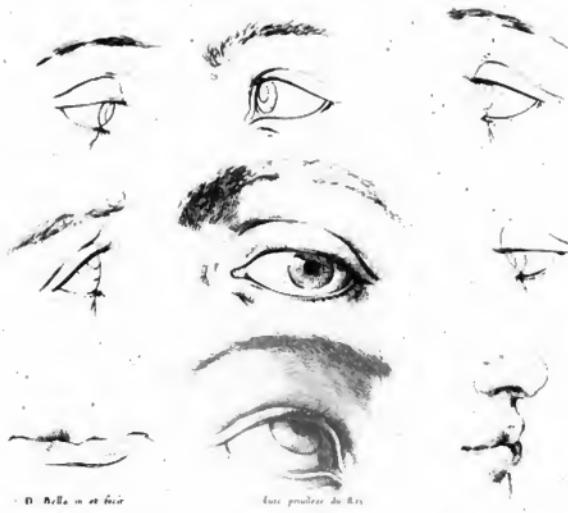
Cum Privil. Regis





S. D. Bella 1840

B
W



B
W



S. D. Bella in et fier

Avec privilége du Roy



S. D. Bella in et fier

Avec privilége du Roy





S. D. Bella morte et froid

Avec privilége du Roy



S. D. Bella morte et froid

Avec privilége du Roy





S. D. Belli in et ject



Avec privilége du Roi



S. D. Belli in et ject

Avec privilége du Roi





S. D. Belli mort et viva

Avec permission du Rcv

10



S. D. Belli in et finit

Avec permission du Rcv

"





S. D. Belli m et fils

Avec privilège du Roi



S. D. Belli m et fils

Avec privilège du Roi





S. D. Belli in et jecit

Avec privilége du Roi

14



S. D. Belli in et jecit

Avec privilége du Roi

15





S. D. Belli n. et véc.

Avec privilège du Roi



S. D. Belli n. et véc.

Avec privilège du Roi





S. D. Belli in etat

à l'âge de 20 ans



S. D. Belli en etat

à l'âge de 20 ans





S. D. Bell's portrait etching

After a painting by Rev.



S. D. Bell's portrait etching

After a painting by Rev.





S. D. Belli n. et sc̄pt̄

Avec privilège du R̄e



S. D. Belli n. et sc̄pt̄

Avec privilège du R̄e





J. D. Belli inv. et fecit

Avec privilége du Roi



J. D. Belli inv. et fecit

Avec privilége du Roi





*Recueil de quarante
griffonnements &
épreuves d'eau forte
par
Della Bella.*

Avec Privé du Roi.

B. fe





Égyp. de la Belli

Janin. sculpsit.





l'eger de la Pelle

Encre et pinceau







Le Florentin à la chasse



A. G. Bell's Bella Fict





Sed Bella Bella fric



Sed Bella Bella jij





Sinf. de la Bella poca





Sinf de la Bella fruta



El velero en llamas

En el mar grande





Gaudre. René Boursault, maire. J. D. Belli frère







(4)



B. f.

B.
E.





26







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